

WESTPORT BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
Baltimore City, Maryland

August 17, 2010

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary, United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing on behalf of the Westport Business Association to urge your support for the City of Baltimore's TIGER II grant application for the Westport Waterfront Transit-Oriented Development (Westport Waterfront TOD).

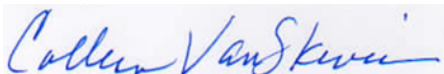
The Westport Business Association, Inc. (WBA) was formed two years ago with a lot of enthusiasm about improving the economic future of business in the neighborhood in light of the coming waterfront development. Our focus is on the business community, but we recognize that residents and business owners are all neighbors tied to each other's success, and that we must all work together to make lasting changes in Westport. There is much work to be done. And with the Westport Waterfront TOD on the horizon, the businesses in Westport finally see a future worthy of the effort.

As the neighborhood of Westport has deteriorated over the years with the loss of the waterfront factories, the businesses located here have suffered as well. The shops along Annapolis Road in Westport have closed or relocated. The few businesses that remain are struggling to stay afloat in a neighborhood characterized by poverty and crime. The Westport Waterfront TOD can change all that.

The Westport Waterfront TOD will bring tremendous activity to Westport, first in terms of thousands of construction jobs, then in the many residents, shoppers and visitors who come to the new waterfront development – all of which means a significant boost in customers and sales for local Westport businesses. The enhancement in roads, connections to MD 295, access to the Light Rail and extended pedestrian and bike trails will open up new and expanding markets to the businesses and opportunities to the neighbors. The extensive improvements to the neighborhood overall will help ensure that the existing neighbors and the existing businesses benefit from the coming development during its construction and as part of its future.

Please award the City of Baltimore a TIGER II grant for the Westport Waterfront TOD. The WBA is excited to be a part of such a remarkable urban redevelopment success. Thank you.

Sincerely,



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cc: Mr. Jamie Kendrick, Baltimore City Department of Transportation